

10 Questions for the President on Health Care

Washington, DC – In light of today's collaboration between ABC News and the Obama administration on the topic of health care reform, there are a few questions we'd like the President to answer. Mr. President:

- 1) During the debate on the so-called stimulus package, your estimates on future unemployment and economic recovery proved to be wildly off-base. Why should Americans now believe you that they will not be forced out of the private coverage they enjoy, as basic economics would dictate?
- 2) Despite your assertions that health care reform will save money, the reality is that plans proposed by Democrats would cost taxpayers between \$1 trillion and \$2 trillion. How does this save money and how will you pay for this?
- 3) If, as you claim, a government-run option is essential to maintaining honest competition in the health insurance market, why is it not also true that we need a government-run competitor in the fast food industry, neighborhood babysitting, or Major League Baseball?
- 4) Proponents of a government-run option, you included, claim that it will compete on a level playing field with private insurance providers. In that case, will your government-run plan operate under a for-profit model and be forced to pay all applicable state, federal, and local taxes?
- 5) How do you expect to meet the growing need for physicians and medical professionals if the government-run plan pays lower than market rates to physicians while forcing them to participate or lose a majority of their patients and their livelihood?
- 6) If the government mandates that all Americans purchase health insurance, it must also define what qualifies as health insurance. Can you provide us your definition (with details please) and explain how this definition will not limit innovation and choice in health care?
- 7) According to the House Democrats' plan, a family of four with an income of \$88,200, four times the federal poverty level, would qualify for health insurance subsidies. In your view, is this a subsidy for low-income Americans or an effort to use taxpayers to put more health care under the purview of the federal government?

- 8) The new Federal Coordinating Council for Comparative Effectiveness Research is charged with determining what treatments should be offered to patients. Do you believe that these personal medical decisions should be made by patients in consultation with their doctors, or by unaccountable bureaucrats?
- 9) Why are there no actively practicing physicians included in the membership of the Council for Comparative Effectiveness Research?
- 10) If the final reform proposal is controversial enough that it will not receive the necessary 60 votes in the Senate, Democrats have left open the possibility of using a procedural move to pass it with only 51 votes. Do you believe massive changes to such a vital area of American life should be pushed through in this manner with only 51 votes?

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